

OUR VISION is that the distribution, diversity and abundance of populations and habitats of breeding, migratory and non-breeding waterbirds are sustained or restored throughout the lands and waters of the Americas.



Waterbird Conservation FOR THE AMERICAS

FULL STORY: Complete documentation of the projects referenced here, as well as information on other waterbird conservation activities, is provided on our website at www.waterbirdconservation.com

FOSTERING WATERBIRD CONSERVATION

OCTOBER 2007



ROSEATE SPOONBILLS
© Charles Bush Photography



THE NORTH AMERICAN WATERBIRD CONSERVATION PLAN, VERSION 1, provided an overarching continental-scale framework for waterbird conservation in North America, Central America and the Caribbean. It focused on colonial-nesting species and the northern portions of the Plan area. This document serves as a second version, providing a more comprehensive picture based on additional input and analyses. It is a reference guide to a collection of products presented online, available more quickly and inexpensively than when printed and bound. Visit www.waterbirdconservation.com for complete documentation.

INSIDE: INITIATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 2002:

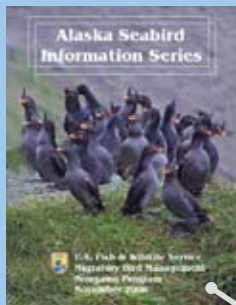
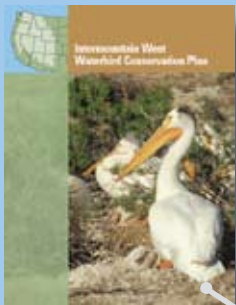
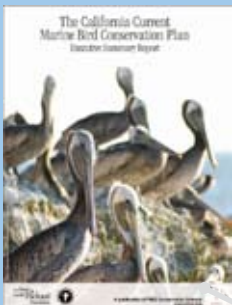
REGIONAL-SCALE
PRIORITIES AND
STRATEGIES

STATUS ASSESSMENT
FOR SOLITARY-NESTING
WATERBIRDS

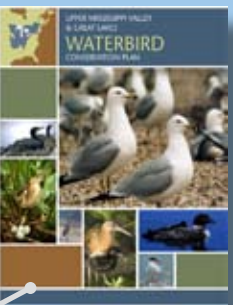
CONSERVING
NEOTROPICAL
WATERBIRDS

LEADERSHIP BY
THE WATERBIRD
CONSERVATION COUNCIL

ADDRESSING THE
URGENT NEEDS OF
SEABIRDS



BIRD HABITAT JOINT VENTURES are invaluable organizations for implementing the habitat-related recommendations described in regional plans. In North America's prairies, plains, and deserts, regional waterbird planning activities are documented in relevant Joint Venture implementation plans.



REGIONAL-SCALE PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

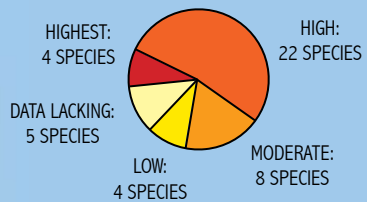
In the United States and Canada, a series of regional waterbird conservation plans provides links from the continental planning framework to smaller scales: national, state/province and Bird Conservation Region. Local partners have compiled and interpreted technical information on regional populations and habitats, assessed conservation status, developed conservation strategies and identified priorities.

STATUS ASSESSMENT FOR SOLITARY NESTING WATERBIRDS

A continental-scale conservation status assessment conducted for 43 marshbirds justifies a growing sense of alarm that many resource managers and conservationists have been voicing about these wetland-dependent species. Marshbirds is an informal term referring to solitary-breeding waterbirds such as loons, grebes, cranes, bitterns and rails. What this diverse group of species shares is vulnerability to numerous threats including loss and degradation of habitat (especially emergent wetlands), disturbance by humans, contamination and predation.

MARSHBIRD SPECIES POPULATION DECLINE

Over half the marshbird species assessed show a statistically significant or at least apparent population decline. These declines, considered along with population size, threats and distribution, place 26 species at the high or highest levels of concern.



AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF CONCERN ARE THOSE RAIL SPECIES THAT EXIST ONLY IN SMALL NUMBERS IN LIMITED POCKETS OF HABITAT.

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CONSERVING NEOTROPICAL WATERBIRDS

A comprehensive catalog of aquatic bird resources, including waterbirds, waterfowl and shorebirds, is now available for Central and South America and the Caribbean thanks to a multi-year project coordinated by BirdLife International on behalf of the Waterbird Conservation Council and funded by the U.S. Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act and numerous partners. The catalog includes:

- Detailed country reports, evaluating the status of waterbirds and waterbird conservation initiatives for each country in the Neotropics
- Bibliography and contact list for each country
- Regional syntheses of waterbird populations, key sites, and conservation opportunities and needs
- Database of key sites, with detailed maps of highest priority sites
- And much more

NEOTROPICAL WATERBIRDS: KEY FINDINGS

- 461 waterbird species have been recorded in the Neotropics, of which 400 occur on a regular basis. Of these 461 species, 417 have been recorded in South America, 214 in Central America, and 172 in the Caribbean.
- 66 species (14.3%) in the Neotropics are globally threatened with extinction, a figure notably higher than the percent for all birds globally (approximately 12%). A further 31 species (6.7%) are considered as near-threatened.
- Although only 20% of Neotropical waterbirds are seabirds, seabirds account for 53% of the globally threatened species.
- Partial or complete population estimates could be derived for 232 species and population trends for 119 species.



KING RAIL
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Missouri Department of Conservation

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Terrell Rich
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

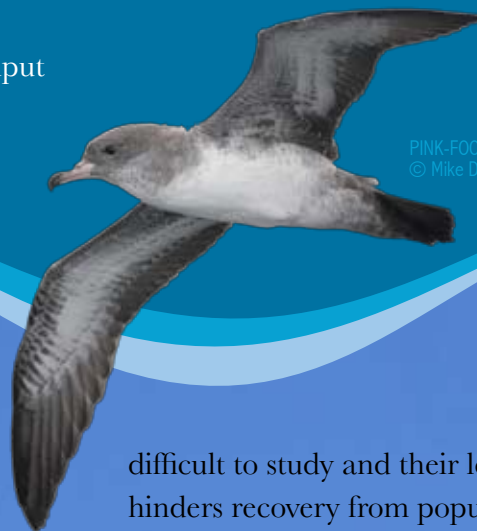
LEADERSHIP BY THE WATERBIRD CONSERVATION COUNCIL

For five years, the Waterbird Conservation Council has provided the structure to represent and steer the initiative. The Council:

- facilitates the development and implementation of conservation strategies, assesses effectiveness and plans the future course of waterbird conservation;
- has an evolving but stable structure, a diverse membership and established processes for determining priorities;
- welcomes observers at its annual meetings and input at any time.

WORKING WITHIN A HEMISPHERIC AND ALL-BIRD FRAMEWORK

In 2003, the Council committed to addressing the needs of waterbirds throughout the Americas. In order to achieve this ambitious, expanded vision, the Council recognizes it must foster strong relationships with other hemispheric-scale conservation initiatives (including for birds or other wildlife, and wetlands or other habitats), and continue to support and collaborate with programs and partners based in Latin America and the Caribbean.



PINK-FOOTED SHEARWATER
© Mike Danzenbaker

ADDRESSING THE URGENT NEEDS OF SEABIRDS

Seabirds are those species that rely heavily on the marine environment, in some cases returning to land only to breed. Typically evolved to nest on isolated islands and headlands, they are particularly vulnerable to disturbance or exotic species introduced by humans. Marine pollution and conflicts with fisheries threaten seabirds while they forage at sea. The location and movements of seabirds make them

difficult to study and their low reproductive rate hinders recovery from population declines. In response to the conservation needs of seabirds, the Council has called on its members and their affiliated organizations to raise general awareness and to increase support for existing and new conservation programs. In particular, the Council emphasizes coordination between regions of the hemisphere to focus on initiating relevant projects for shared species or shared threats.



SEABIRDS ACCOUNT FOR OVER HALF OF ALL
GLOBALLY THREATENED AQUATIC BIRDS,
UNDERSCORING THE URGENCY AND
IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING
THREATS AT SEA AS WELL
AS ON LAND.

MASKED BOOBIES
Jennifer Wheeler
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

WATERBIRDS NETWORK LISTSERV: The listserv is a means of communicating with others – researchers, educators, wildlife-managers, conservationists – interested in Waterbird Conservation for the Americas. To subscribe, simply send a blank email to waterbirdsnetwork-request@lists.fws.gov with the word “subscribe” in the subject line.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Visit our website at www.waterbirdconservation.com for complete documentation.